

## LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

TO

## THE ACADEMY

CONSISTING OF

NOTABLE ARTICLES, REVIEWS, Etc.,

WHICH HAVE APPEARED FROM TIME TO TIME IN "THE ACADEMY" SINCE ITS INCEPTION

## ABOUT DICKENS

BY LIONEL JOHNSON

(April 22, 1899)

Why is Dickens so frequently and abundantly misquoted, his incidents misrepresented? Why do writers, capable of correct quotation from, and accurate allusions to, Sappho, Martin Tupper, and M. Anatole France come to grief when they come to Dickens? To his adorers, of whom I am humblest among the greatest, this laxity is exasperating. A few years since, some monstrous person, wishing to speak of Sam Weller's famous crumpet story, turned the crumpets into muffins. Aghast at this outrage, the late Mr. Walter Wren wrote to a daily paper, protesting that, to his best recollection, muffins are not once mentioned in "Pickwick." Absurd! Muffins are mentioned thrice, and a muffin-boy once. Yet Mr. Wren, if report be true, shared with Sir Walter Besant and another the distinction of having scraped through Calverley's intricate "Pickwick Papers" examination. Not long ago, a critic, wishing to redeem the memory of Dickens from the stain of bad English left upon it by the title of "Our Mutual Friend," observed that the phrase is put into the uneducated, if poetic, mouth of Silas Wegg, and that Dickens was therefore aware of its vulgarity. It is not put into Wegg's mouth, but into Mr. Boffin's, and in "Little Dorrit" there is proof that Dickens divides with—*horresco referens*—Miss Austin the disgrace of having personally sanctioned the vulgarity.

But that Mr. Gissing should be an offender is very grievous. His recent monograph on Dickens is by far the finest and truest elaborate piece of criticism that has yet been written upon Dickens. Yet flies are in the amber: vexatious flies. As thus: page 57—speaking of the abuse of "coincidence" by Dickens, Mr. Gissing writes:—"When Oliver Twist casually makes acquaintance with an old gentleman in the streets of London, this old gentleman of course turns out to be his relative, who desired of all things to discover the boy." The point is unaffected; but Mr. Brownlow was not Oliver's relative, he was his father's dearest friend. Page 82—speaking of the principles upon which Dickens metes out his punishments, Mr. Gissing writes: "Sneers or Mr. Creakle we will by no means forgive; nay, of their hard lot, so well merited, we will make all the fun we can . . ." But we take leave of Mr. Creakle as a Middlesex magistrate, exhibiting his pet and pious criminals, Litimer and Uriah Heep, to the disgusted David and Traddles. I am not aware that a Middlesex magistracy is a very miserable position. Page 121—speaking of "the respectable man," Mr. Gissing writes: "If my memory serves me, Mr. Pecksniff did not keep a gig (possibly it is implied in his position) . . ." Mr. Pecksniff's gig

is carefully described, defined, and named—in one chapter the vehicle is mentioned by the name of gig no fewer than eighteen times. Upon p. 141 I would prefer to have the great and dear name of Mrs. MacStinger spelled as Dickens spelled it. Upon the following page it is untrue to say that Mrs. Gargery provoked the fight between Joe and Orlick "by a malicious lie." She was malicious, but told no lie. Upon page 147 we meet with "Sophy Whackles." Now Dick Swiveller's flame was, until she became Mrs. Chegga, Miss Sophy Wackles. Page 159: Dora Spenlow's dog was Jip, not Gip. Page 164 "The booful lady" should be "the boofer lady." Page 168: The huge dish which young Copperfield was supposed to have devoured unaided consisted not of cutlets, but of chops. Page 172: Mr. Gissing speaks of "Mr. Smallweed giving his friend Mr. Jobling a dinner." Prodigious! No Smallweed ever gave any one anything—but trouble. Mr. Guppy gave the dinner; and when Chick Smallweed returned to his family circle the grandfather complimented him for living upon his friend. Page 174: Old Mr. Willet is described as sitting, after the ruin of the Maypole by the rioters, "staring at his old-time companion, the kitchen-boiler." This he could not have done, for the rioters left him tied to his chair in the bar: if he was consciously staring at anything, it was at the downcut Maypole looking in through the window. Page 185—speaking of "Sketches by Boz," Mr. Gissing writes: "Dealing for the most part with vulgarity, his first book is very free from vulgarisms. In one of the earliest letters to Forster he speaks of 'your invite;' but no such abomination deforms the printed pages." Unhappily, this very abomination itself deforms the pages of "Boz": Mr. Gissing will find it in "The Steam Excursion." Page 192: Mr. Gissing, quoting the description of a certain scene, says that it occurs when "Jonas, become a murderer, is lurking in his own house. . . ." It occurred before, not after, Montague Tigg's murder, and the fact intensifies the suggestive grimness of the description. Page 236: "A tragedy of drink Dickens never gives us." Mr. Gissing forgets "The Drunkard's Death," last of the "Sketches by Boz;" also "The Stroller's Tale," in "Pickwick."

Infinitesimal, these slips of memory or of the pen: reflecting no discredit upon Mr. Gissing's admirable study, which has placed all lovers of Dickens in his debt for ever. And yet they are characteristic, symptomatic of that slight inaccuracy which besets those who write upon Dickens, or refer to him. I am convinced that were Mr. Gissing to write upon Thackeray no such slips would occur. It seems reserved for Dickens to enjoy, with the Bible and Shakespeare, that penalty of popularity and familiarity, inaccurate usage. It has never been my lot to write of Dickens, and I am glad of it: for I am certain that the epidemic of error would have promptly seized me, and that I should have found myself writing about Sam Swiveller and Dick Weller, or sending Mr. Pickwick into the wrong bedroom at Norwich.

## SAINTE-BEUVE

BY MATTHEW ARNOLD

(November 13, 1869)

THIS is neither the time nor the place to attempt any complete account of the remarkable man whose pen, busy to the end, and to the end charming and instructing us, has within the last few weeks dropped from his hand for ever. A few words are all that the occasion allows, and it is hard not to make them words of mere regret and eulogy. Most of what is at this moment written about him is in this strain, and very naturally; the world has some arrears to make up to him, and now, if ever, it feels this. Late, and as it were by accident, he came to his due estimation in France; here in England it is only within the last ten years that he can be said to have been publicly known at all. We who write these lines knew him long and owed him much; something of that debt we will endeavour to pay, not, as we ourselves might be most inclined, by following the impulse of the hour and simply praising him, but, as he himself would have preferred, by recalling what in sum he chiefly was, and what is the essential scope of his effort and working.

Shortly before Sainte-Beuve's death appeared a new edition of his "Portraits Contemporains," one of his earlier works, of which the contents date from 1832 and 1833, before his method and manner of criticism were finally formed. But the new edition is enriched with notes and retouches added as the volumes were going through the press, and which bring our communications with him down to these very latest months of his life. Among them is a comment on a letter of Madame George Sand, in which she had spoken of the admiration excited by one of his articles:—

I leave this as it stands (says he), because the sense and the connection of the passage require it; but, personne ne sait mieux que moi à quoi s'en tenir sur le mérite absolu de ces articles qui sont tout au plus, et même lorsqu'ils réussissent le mieux, des choses sensées dans un genre médiocre. Ce qu'ils ont eu d'alerte et d'à-propos à leur moment suffit à peine à expliquer ces exagérations de l'amitié. Réservons l'admiration pour les œuvres de poésie et d'art, pour les compositions élevées; la plus grande gloire du critique est dans l'approbation et dans l'estime des bons esprits.

This comment, which extends to his whole work as a critic, has all the good breeding and delicacy by which Sainte-Beuve's writing was distinguished, and it expresses, too, what was to a great extent, no doubt, his sincere conviction. Like so many who have tried their hand at *œuvres de poésie et d'art*, his preference, his dream, his ideal was there; the rest was comparatively journeyman-work, to be done well and estimably rather than ill and discredibly, and with precious rewards of its own, besides, in exercising the faculties and in keeping off ennui; but still work of an inferior order. Yet when one looks at the names on the title-page of the "Portraits Contemporains": Chateaubriand, Béranger, Lamennais, Lamartine, Victor Hugo, George Sand—names representing, in our judgment, very different degrees of eminence, but none of which we have the least inclination to disparage—is it certain that the works of poetry and art to which these names are attached eclipse the work done by Sainte-Beuve? Could Sainte-Beuve have had what was no doubt his will, and in the line of the "Consolations" and "Volupté" have produced works with the power and vogue of Lamartine's works, or Chateaubriand's, or Hugo's, he would have been more interesting to us to-day—would he have stood permanently higher? We venture to doubt it. Works of poetry and art like Molière's and Milton's eclipse no doubt all productions of the order of the "Causeries du Lundi," and the highest

language of admiration may very properly be reserved for such works alone. Inferior works in the same kind have their moment of vogue when their admirers apply to them this language; there is a moment when a drama of Hugo's finds a public to speak of it as if it were Molière's, and a poem of Lamartine's finds a public to speak of it as if it were Milton's. At no moment will a public be found to speak of work like Sainte-Beuve's "Causeries" in such fashion; and if this alone were regarded, one might allow oneself to leave to his work the humbler rank which he assigns to it. But the esteem inspired by his work remains and grows, while the vogue of all works of poetry and art but the best, and the high-pitched admiration which goes with vogue, diminish and disappear; and this redresses the balance. Five-and-twenty years ago it would have seemed absurd, in France, to place Sainte-Beuve, as a French author, on a level with Lamartine. Lamartine had at that time still his vogue, and, though assuredly no Molière or Milton, had for the time of his vogue the halo which surrounds properly none but great poets like these. To this Sainte-Beuve cannot pretend, but what does Lamartine retain of it now? It would still be absurd to place Sainte-Beuve on a level with Molière or Milton; is it any longer absurd to place him on a level with Lamartine, or even above him? In other words, excellent work in a lower kind counts in the long run above work which is short of excellence in a higher; first-rate criticism has a permanent value greater than that of any but first-rate works of poetry and art.

And Sainte-Beuve's criticism may be called first-rate. His curiosity was unbounded, and he was born a *naturalist*, carrying into letters, so often the mere domain of rhetoric and futile amusement, the ideas and methods of scientific natural inquiry, and this he did while keeping in perfection the ease of movement and charm of touch which belong to letters properly so called, and which give them their unique power of universal penetration and of propagandism. Man, as he is, and as his history and the productions of his spirit show him, was the object of his study and interest; he strove to find the real data with which, in dealing with man and his affairs, we have to do. Beyond this study he did not go—to find the real data. But he was determined they should be the real data, and not fictitious and conventional data, if he could help it. This is what, in our judgment, distinguishes him, and makes his work of singular use and instructiveness. Most of us think that we already possess the data required, and have only to proceed to deal with human affairs in the light of them. This is, as is well known, a thoroughly English persuasion. It is what makes us such keen politicians; it is an honour to an Englishman, we say, to take part in political strife. Solomon says, on the other hand, "It is an honour to a man to cease from strife, but every fool will be meddling;" and Sainte-Beuve held with Solomon. Many of us, again, have principles and connections which are all in all to us, and we arrange data to suit them; a book, a character, a period of history, we see from a point of view given by our principles and connections, and to the requirements of this point of view we make the book, the character, the period, adjust themselves. Sainte-Beuve never did so, and criticised with unflinching acuteness those who did. "Tocqueville arrivait avec son moule tout prêt; la réalité n'y répond pas, et les choses ne se prêtent pas à y entrer."

M. de Tocqueville commands much more sympathy in England than his critic, and the very mention of him will awaken impressions unfavourable to Sainte-Beuve; for the French Liberals honour Tocqueville and at heart dislike Sainte-Beuve; and people in England always take their cue from the French Liberals. For that very reason have we boldly selected for quotation this criticism on him, because



the course criticised in Tocqueville is precisely the course with which an Englishman would sympathise, and which he would be apt to take himself; while Sainte-Beuve, in criticising him, shows just the tendency which is his characteristic, and by which he is of use to us. Tocqueville, as is well known, finds in the ancient *régime* all the germs of the centralisation which the French Revolution developed and established. This centralisation is his bugbear, as it is the bugbear of English Liberalism; and directly he finds it, the system where it appears is judged. Disliking, therefore, the French Revolution for its centralisation, and then finding centralisation in the ancient *régime* also, he at once sees in this discovery, "*mille motifs nouveaux de haïr l'ancien régime.*" How entirely does every Englishman abound here, as the French say, in Tocqueville's sense; how faithfully have all Englishmen repeated and re-echoed Tocqueville's book on the ancient *régime* ever since it was published; how incapable are they of supplying, or of imagining the need of supplying, any corrective to it! But hear Sainte-Beuve:—

Dans son effroi de la centralisation, l'auteur en vient à méconnaître de grands bienfaits d'équité dus à Richelieu et à Louis XIV. Homme du peuple ou bourgeois, sous Louis XIII., ne valait-il pas mieux avoir affaire à un intendant, à l'homme du roi, qu'à un gouverneur de province, à quelque duc d'Epéron? Ne maudissons pas ceux à qui nous devons les commencements de l'égalité devant la loi, la première ébauche de l'ordre moderne qui nous a affranchis, nous et nos pères, et le tiers-état tout entier, de cette quantité de petits tyrans qui couvraient le sol, grands seigneurs ou hobereaux.

The point of view of Sainte-Beuve is as little that of a glowing Revolutionist as it is that of a chagrined Liberal; it is that of a man who seeks the *truth* about the ancient *régime* and its institutions, and who instinctively seeks to correct anything strained and *arranged* in the representation of them. "*Voyons les choses de l'histoire telles qu'elles se sont passées.*"

At the risk of offending the prejudices of English readers we have thus gone for an example of Sainte-Beuve's essential method to a sphere where his application of it makes a keen impression, and created for him, in his lifetime, warm enemies and detractors. In that sphere it is not easily permitted to a man to be a *naturalist*, but a *naturalist* Sainte-Beuve could not help being always. Accidentally, at the end of his life, he gave delight to the Liberal opinion of his own country and ours by his famous speech in the Senate on behalf of free thought. He did but follow his instinct, however, of opposing, in whatever medium he was, the current of that medium when it seemed excessive and tyrannous. The extraordinary social power of French Catholicism makes itself specially felt in an assembly like the Senate. An elderly Frenchman of the upper class is apt to be, not unfrequently, a man of pleasure, reformed or exhausted, and the deference of such a personage to repression and Cardinals is generally excessive. This was enough to rouse Sainte-Beuve's opposition; but he would have had the same tendency to oppose the heady current of a medium where mere Liberalism reigned, where it was Professor Fawcett, and not the Archbishop of Bordeaux, who took the bit in his teeth.

That Sainte-Beuve stopped short at curiosity, at the desire to know things as they really are, and did not press on with faith and ardour to the various and immense applications of this knowledge which suggest themselves, and of which the accomplishment is reserved for the future, was due in part to his character, but more to his date, his period, his circumstances. Let it be enough for a man to have served well one need of his age; and among politicians and rhetoricians to have been a *naturalist*, at a time when for any good and

lasting work in government and literature our old conventional draught of the nature of things wanted in a thousand directions re-verifying and correcting.

## THE DEATH OF PUCK

### I.

I fear that Puck is dead—it is so long  
Since men last saw him—dead with all the rest  
Of that sweet elfin crew that made their nest  
In hollow huts, where hazels sing their song;  
Dead and for ever, like the antique throng  
The elves replaced; the Dryad that you guessed  
Behind the leaves; the Naiad weed-bedressed;  
The leaf-eared Faun that loved to lead you wrong.  
Tell me, thou hopping Robin, hast thou met  
A little man, no bigger than thyself,  
Whom they call Puck, where woodland bells are wet?  
Tell me, thou Wood-Mouse, hast thou seen an elf  
Whom they call Puck, and is he seated yet,  
Capped with a snail-shell, on his mushroom-shelf?

### II.

The Robin gave three hops, and chirped, and said:  
"Yes, I knew Puck, and loved him; though I throw  
He mimicked oft my whistle chuckling low;  
Yes, I knew Cousin Puck; but he is dead.  
We found him lying on his mushroom bed—  
The Wren and I—half-covered up with snow,  
As we were hopping where the berries grow.  
We think he died of cold. Ay, Puck is fled."  
And then the Wood-Mouse said: "We made the Mole,  
The old, blind Mole, dig deep beneath the moss  
And four big Dormice placed him in the hole.  
The Squirrel made with sticks a little cross;  
Puck was a Christian elf, and had a soul;  
And all we velvet jackets mourn his loss."

EUGENE LEE-HAMILTON.

(May 3, 1890)

## REVIEW: BY JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS

(April 9, 1870)

*The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley.* The Text carefully Revised, with Notes and a Memoir by W. M. ROSSETTI. Two Vols. (London: Moxon, 1870.)

THIS book contains a complete and revised reprint of all Shelley's poems, together with the addition of many juvenile verses, translations, and other fragments not hitherto collected, Shelley's own notes, and those of Mrs. Shelley, published in her edition of the poems, a new Life by Mr. Rossetti, and critical notes in explanation of the readings adopted in doubtful passages. This enumeration of its contents is sufficient to show that the new edition is more complete and full of interest than any of those which have preceded it; since it has taken nothing from them and has added much. Mr. Rossetti has executed the whole of his work in a spirit of enthusiasm and reverence; whatever faults may be detected in it will not be found to spring from any carelessness or presumption in the editor. Mr. Rossetti's

admiration for Shelley is unbounded. The first words of his memoir run thus:—"To write the Life of Shelley is (if I may trust my own belief) to write the Life of the greatest English poet since Milton, or possibly since Shakspeare." In another place he says:—"The archangelic feet, and brain, and heart, which quitted England in the spring of 1816, were never again to be repelled by that grudging and unwitting stepmother." Assuredly we have in these sentences a due amount of respect and passion for the poet who is named pre-eminently "the divine." Yet this devotion does not prevent Mr. Rossetti from fairly stating the events of Shelley's life: though highly sympathetic, he is not otherwise than temperate in his advocacy of Shelley's cause: even the coldness with which he speaks of Harriet Westbrook seems to spring less from the fact that she had grown worse than useless to the poet, than from some well-considered estimate of her own unworthiness. The memoir is remarkable for its moderation of tone; though it adds but little, if anything, to our knowledge of the facts of Shelley's life, it is graphic, and minute, without being lengthy. Its chief fault is affectation or impurity of style; abundant passages might be quoted in support of this assertion: it is enough to refer to pp. 39, 55, 123, and the last sentence of the Memoir.

Apart from these defects, the Memoir contains many passages of brilliant narrative and pithy observation. We are especially grateful to Mr. Rossetti for his well-selected extracts from previous biographies; without unduly burdening his own memoir, they add vividness and variety to our picture of Shelley.

By far the most important part of Mr. Rossetti's work is that which relates to the editing of the poems. In his preface he very candidly and clearly states the plan which he has followed. To begin with, he omits nothing, however fragmentary, which, on due evidence, he believes to have been written by Shelley. For the insertion of some foolish early poems he offers an apology in his preface (Vol. I., pp. 13, 14); but we are sure that every real student of Shelley will be glad to have these wild and rambling verses "absolute and heinous rubbish" though they be. Of the text Mr. Rossetti writes as follows (Preface, Vol. I., p. 15):—

I have considered it my clear duty and prerogative to set absolutely wrong grammar right; as thus:—

"Thou, too, O Comet, beautiful and fierce,  
Who *drewest* [*drew*] the heart of this frail universe;"

and to set absolutely wrong rhyming right; as thus—

"Beneath whose spires which swayed in the red *flame* [*light*]  
Reclining as they ate, of liberty,  
And hope, and justice, and Laone's name,  
Earth's children did a woof of happy converse frame;"

and to set absolutely wrong metre right; as thus—

"This plan might be tried too. Where's General  
Laoctonos? It is my royal pleasure,"

instead of—

"This plan might be tried too. Where's General Laoctonos?  
It is my royal pleasure."

Occasionally too, he has allowed himself to resort to conjectural emendations. But he pleads (on p. 16) that he has made sparing use of them. It is a disadvantage that all his changes, whether grammatical or metrical, whether based on MS. authority or conjecture, are printed without notice in the text, and without references to the account and explanation of them given in the notes at the end of each volume. This appears to us a mistake. It would surely be better to select some edition, say that of Mrs. Shelley, and by means of annotations, brackets, italics, or any other expedient, however clumsy, to suggest emendations and

display varieties of reading. In fairness to Mr. Rossetti we must add that he has most scrupulously followed his own method as explained in the preface, so that the careful student is safe in his hands.

As regards restitution of rhyme and metre, it does not appear that the editor has always MS. authority for what he has done. Relying on the carelessness of Shelley and his printers, he corrects where he believes correction needed. To take this liberty with a poet's versification is surely hazardous; and what are we to say about corrections of bad grammar? The instance which Mr. Rossetti gives in the passage already quoted from his preface is the restoration of its proper termination to a verb in the second person singular. Now Shelley was constantly in the habit of treating the second person singular of his verbs as if the termination in *est* did not exist. Wherever Shelley does so, with, as far as we have observed, one exception, Mr. Rossetti corrects him. There are, for example, seven instances of such corrections noticed on p. 475 of Vol. I. A passage in "Prometheus" (Vol. I., p. 328) is rendered cacophonous by the substitution of *turn'st* for *turned*, where, had the correction been exact, Mr. Rossetti ought to have printed *turned'st*. Another in "Queen Mab," p. 36, is emended on the same principle. But Mr. Rossetti is not uniform: the celebrated line from the "Skylark":

Thou lov'st, but ne'er knew love's sad satiety,

he leaves, because "the sound of the lovely line would be so spoiled by changing the word into 'knew'st' that no rectification of grammar is permissible." Would it not have befitted Mr. Rossetti either ruthlessly to carry out his work of grammatical rectification, or else to consider whether in all the instances of errors which he has corrected, as in the case of this line from the "Skylark," Shelley did not sacrifice accuracy of grammar to euphony? If he did so at all consciously or deliberately, then it was the duty of the editor to respect his intention. If he did so by a blunder, for which he would himself have blushed, then why not correct the "Skylark" as well as "Prometheus," or "Queen Mab"? There is a line in one of Clough's finest poems, "The Shadow":—

When thou ascended to thy God and ours,

where the same grammatical error occurs. Would Mr. Rossetti have here insisted, in the face of MSS., upon printing "ascendedst"? We suppose so. Yet it is not without question whether great poets are not justified by the modern tendency to lose inflections in dropping, for the sake of euphony, the harsh sound of the termination in *est*.

We have said enough to characterise Mr. Rossetti's valuable edition of Shelley. The following stanza from "Lines written for Miss Sophia Stacey" may be quoted as a specimen of the hitherto unpublished poems:—

As dew beneath the wind of morning,  
As the sea which whirlwinds waken,  
As the birds at thunder's warning,  
As aught mute but deeply shaken,  
As one who feels an unseen spirit,  
Is my heart when thine is near it.

The question of such difficult readings as occur in the "Stanzas written in Dejection at Naples," in some passages of "Prometheus" and "Alastor," in the verses called "Remembrance," and elsewhere, may better be treated in a critical essay than in a review. But with respect to all such matters we may safely say that Mr. Rossetti has shown himself a careful critic and accurate scholar, if at times he is needlessly innovating and subtle.



## REVIEW: BY JOHN TYNDALL

*Life and Letters of Faraday.* By DR. BENCE JONES. Two Vols., 8vo. (Longmans. 1869.)

(June 11, 1870)

THE first volume of the "Life and Letters of Faraday" revealed to us the youth who was to be father to the man. Skilful, aspiring, resolute, he grew steadily in knowledge and in power. The fervour of a religion was in his work, and it was this, as much as his intellect, which enabled him to make a mark upon his age which can never be effaced. At the beginning of the second volume of the "Life and Letters" he appears to us as the discoverer of a new and vast electrical domain. Consciously or unconsciously, the relation of Action to Reaction was ever present to his mind. It had been fostered by his discovery of Magnetic Rotations, and it planted in him more daring ideas of a similar kind. Magnetism he knew could be evoked by electricity, and he thought that electricity, in its turn, ought to be capable of evolution by magnetism. On August 29th, 1831, his experiments on this subject began. He had been fortified by previous trials; which, though failures, had begotten instincts directing him towards the truth. Strictly speaking, there are no failures to the strong worker. He may miss the outward object, but he gains the inner light, education, and expansion. Of this Faraday's life was a constant illustration. By November he had discovered and colligated a multitude of the most wonderful and unexpected phenomena. He had generated currents by currents; currents by magnets, permanent and transitory; and he afterwards generated currents by the earth itself. Arago's "Magnetism of Rotation," which had for years offered itself as a challenge to the best scientific intellects of Europe, now fell into his hands. It proved to be a beautiful but still special illustration of the great principle of Magneto-electric Induction. Nothing equal to this, in the way of pure experimental inquiry, had previously been achieved.

The value of a discovery is to be measured by the intellectual action it calls forth; and it was Faraday's good fortune to strike, not the nuggets, but the lodes of scientific truth, in which some of the best intellects of the age have found occupation.

The salient quality of Faraday's scientific character reveals itself from beginning to end of these volumes: a union of ardour and patience—the one prompting the attack, the other holding him on to it till defeat was final or victory assured. Certainty in one sense or the other was necessary to his peace of mind. The right method of investigation is perhaps incommunicable; it depends on the individual rather than on the system, and our contemporaries, we think, miss the mark when they point to Faraday's researches as merely illustrative of the power of the inductive philosophy. The brain may be filled with that philosophy, but without the energy and insight which this man possesses, and which with him are personal and distinctive, we shall never rise to the level of his achievements. His power is that of individual genius rather than of philosophic method. It is the energy of a strong and independent soul expressing itself after its own fashion, and acknowledging no mediator between it and nature.

The second volume of the "Life and Letters," like the first, is a historic treasury as regards Faraday's work and character and his scientific and social relations. It contains letters from Humboldt, Herschel, Hachette, De-la Rive, Dumas, Liebig, Melloni, Becquerel, Ersted, Plücker, Du Bois-Reymond, Lord Melbourne, Prince Louis Napoleon, and many other distinguished men. I notice with particular pleasure a letter from Sir John Herschel in reply to a sealed

packet addressed to him by Faraday, but which he had permission to open if he pleased. The packet referred to one of the many unfulfilled hopes which spring up in the mind of fertile investigators:—

Go on and prosper, "from strength to strength," like a victor marching with assured step to further conquests; and be certain that no voice will join more heartily in the peans that already begin to rise, and will speedily swell into a shout of triumph, astounding even to yourself, than that of J. F. W. Herschel.

As an encourager and inspirer of the scientific worker, this fine spirit is still beneficently active.

Faraday's behaviour to Melloni in 1835 merits special notice. The young man was a political exile in Paris. He had newly fashioned and applied the thermo-electric pile, and had obtained with it results of the greatest importance. But they were not appreciated. With the sickness of disappointed hope Melloni waited for the report of the Commissioners appointed by the Academy to examine his labours. At length he published his researches in the *Annales de Chimie*. They thus fell into the hands of Faraday, who, discerning at once their extraordinary merit, obtained for Melloni the Rumford Medal of the Royal Society. A sum of money always accompanies this medal, and the pecuniary help was at this time even more essential than the mark of honour to the young refugee. Melloni's gratitude was boundless:—

Et vous, monsieur (he writes to Faraday), qui appartenez à une société à laquelle je n'avais rien offert, vous qui me connaissiez à peine le nom; vous n'avez pas demandé si j'avais des ennemis faibles ou puissants, ni calculé quel en était le nombre; mais vous avez parlé pour l'opprimé étranger, pour celui qui n'avait pas le moindre droit à tant de bienveillance, et vos paroles ont été accueillies favorablement par des collègues consciencieux! Je reconnais bien là des hommes dignes de leur noble mission, les véritables représentants de la science d'un pays libre et généreux.

Within the prescribed limits of this article it would be impossible to give even the slenderest summary of Faraday's correspondence, or to carve from it more than the merest fragments of his character. His letters, written to Lord Melbourne and others in 1836, regarding his pension, illustrate his uncompromising independence. The Prime Minister had offended him, but assuredly the apology demanded and given was complete. I think it certain that, notwithstanding the very full account of this transaction given by Dr. Bence Jones, motives and influences were at work which even now are not entirely revealed. The Minister was bitterly attacked, but he bore the censure of the Press with great dignity. Faraday, while he disavowed having either directly or indirectly furnished the matter of those attacks, did not publicly exonerate his lordship. The Hon. Caroline Fox had proved herself Faraday's ardent friend, and it was she who had healed the breach between the philosopher and the Minister. She manifestly thought that Faraday ought to have come forward in Lord Melbourne's defence, and there is a flavour of resentment in one of her letters to him on the subject. No doubt Faraday had good grounds for his reticence, but they are to me unknown.

In 1841 his health broke down utterly, and he went to Switzerland with his wife and brother-in-law. His bodily vigour soon revived, and he accomplished feats of walking respectable even for a trained mountaineer. The published extracts from his Swiss journal contain many beautiful and touching allusions. Amid references to the tints of the Jungfrau, the blue rifts of the glaciers, and the noble Niesen towering over the Lake of Thun we come upon the charming little scrap which I have elsewhere quoted:—"Clout-nail making goes on here rather considerably, and is a very

neat and pretty operation to observe. I love a smith's shop and anything relating to smithery. My father was a smith." This is from his journal; but he is unconsciously speaking to somebody—perhaps to the world.

His descriptions of the Staub-bach, Giessbach, and of the scenic effects of sky and mountain are all fine and sympathetic. But amid it all, and in reference to it all, he tells his sister that "true enjoyment is from within, not from without." In those days Agassiz was living under a boulder on the glacier of the Aar. Faraday met Forbes at the Grimsel, and arranged with him an excursion to the "Hôtel des Neuchâtelois;" but indisposition put the project out.

From the Fort of Ham, in 1843, Faraday received a letter addressed to him by Prince Louis Napoleon Bonaparte. He read this letter to me many years ago, and the desire and capacity shown in various ways by the French Emperor to turn modern science to account have often reminded me of it since. At the age of thirty-five the prisoner of Ham speaks of "rendering his captivity less sad by studying the great discoveries," which science owes to Faraday; and he asks a question which reveals his cast of thought at the time: "What is the most simple combination to give to a voltaic battery in order to produce a spark capable of setting fire to powder under water or under ground?" Should the necessity arise, the French Emperor will not lack at the outset the best appliances of modern science; while we, I fear, shall have to learn the magnitude of the resources we are now neglecting amid the pangs of actual war.\*

One turns with renewed pleasure to Faraday's letters to his wife, published in the second volume. Here surely the loving essence of the man appears more distinctly than anywhere else. From the house of Dr. Percy, in Birmingham, he writes thus:—

Here—even here—the moment I leave the table I wish I were with you IN QUIET. Oh! what happiness is ours. My runs into the world in this way only serve to make me esteem that happiness the more.

And again:—

We have been to a grand conversazione in the town-hall, and I have now returned to my room to talk with you, as the pleasantest and happiest thing that I can do. Nothing rests me so much as communion with you. I feel it even now as I write, and catch myself saying the words aloud as I write them.

Take this, moreover, as indicative of his love for Nature:—

After writing, I walk out in the evening hand in hand with my dear wife to enjoy the sunset; for to me who love scenery, of all that I have seen or can see there is none surpasses that of heaven. A glorious sunset brings with it a thousand thoughts that delight me.

Of the numberless lights thrown upon him by the "Life and Letters" some fall upon his religion. In a Letter to a Lady he describes himself as belonging to "a very small and despised sect of Christians, known, if known at all, as Sandemanians, and our hope is founded on the faith that is in Christ." He adds, "I do not think it at all necessary to tie the study of the natural sciences and religion together, and in my intercourse with my fellow-creatures, that which is religious and that which is philosophical have ever been two distinct things." He saw clearly the danger of quitting his moorings, and his science became the safeguard of his particular faith. For his investigations so filled his mind as to leave no room for sceptical questionings, thus shielding

\* What we need in this country is a man in authority, competent to select from the vast, but in many particulars irrelevant mass of science, those portions which are of real and paramount importance, and determined to have them properly taught.

from the assaults of philosophy the creed of his youth. Love, reverence, awe, worship were the correlatives of his organisation; they were implied in the eddies of his blood and in the tremors of his brain; and, however their outward and visible forms might have changed, Faraday would still have been a religious man.

Among my old papers I find the following remarks on one of my earliest dinners with Faraday. "At two o'clock he came down for me. He, his niece, and myself formed the party. 'I never give dinners,' he said. 'I don't know how to give dinners, and I never dine out. But I should not like my friends to attribute this to a wrong cause. I act thus for the sake of securing time for work, and not through religious motives as some imagine.' He said grace. I am almost ashamed to call his prayer a 'saying' of grace. In the language of Scripture it might be described as the petition of a son, into whose heart God had sent the spirit of His Son, and who with absolute trust asked a blessing from his father. We dined on roast beef, Yorkshire pudding, and potatoes; drank sherry, talked of research and its requirements, and of his habit of keeping himself free from the distractions of society. He was bright and joyful—boylike, in fact, though he is now sixty-two. His work excites admiration, but contact with him warms and elevates the heart. Here, surely, is a strong man. I love strength, but let me not forget the example of its union with modesty, tenderness, and sweetness in the character of Faraday." I fear the lesson was but imperfectly learned.

Faraday's progress in discovery, and the salient points of his character, are well brought out by the wise selection and arrangement of letters and extracts by Dr. Bence Jones. The labours of Faraday's biographer are, in fact, of incalculable worth. I will not call them final. So great a character will challenge reconstruction. In the coming time some sympathetic spirit, with the requisite strength, knowledge, and solvent power, will, I doubt not, render these materials plastic, give them more perfect organic form, and send through them, with less of interruption, the currents of Faraday's life. Dr. Bence Jones' labours have rendered such a result possible; but the public appreciation of those labours, as they now stand, has been declared by the rapidity with which the first considerable edition of the "Life and Letters" has been diffused. Let me, in winding up, express my high estimate of the value of this labour of love.

## REVIEW: BY W. E. HENLEY

(April 1, 1882)

*Familiar Studies of Men and Books.* By ROBERT L. STEVENSON. (Chatto and Windus.)

IN this collection of reprinted pieces—from the *Cornhill*, from *Macmillan*, and from the *New Quarterly*—there is included not a little very admirable work. Mr. Stevenson is not less himself—is not less humorous, perspicuous, original, engaging—when he is critical of character and literature than when he takes to discoursing to bachelors and maids, or playing at travel on Flemish rivers, or trudging, whimsical and adventurous, behind a she-ass in the Cevennes. He has most of, if not all, the qualities that make the critic: an impartial, yet sympathetic, intelligence; a fresh and liberal interest in life and art and man; a student's patience; an artist's fine perceptiveness; a passion for all forms and aspects of truth; a frank, whole-hearted courage; a good method of analysis; rare distinction of style; and singular powers of felicitous and appropriate expression. That this is so the present volume proves



abundantly. It is not of equal and unbroken excellence. In places it seems mistaken, and in places it is tedious; it is capable of making you nod, and it is capable of making you swear. But its good matter is good indeed; its bad is only bad in comparison with its best. Its purpose is serious and critical; and it achieves its purpose admirably. But, for all that, it has something of the chief characteristics of its author, it is touched with something of the fresh and happy grace, the bright, humane fancy, the engaging originality, that made such pleasant reading for so many of the "Inland Voyage," of the "Travels," and—as I like to think—of the "Virginibus Puerisque."

The "Studies" are nine in number. They are sufficiently varied in manner and matter. They range from the fifteenth century to the present time, from the France of Villon to the Japan of Yoshida-Torajiro, from Knox at Holyrood to Pepys at Whitehall, from Hugo's novels to the love-letters of Sylvander and Clarinda. It is much the same with the style in which they are written and the spirit of their utterance. Something of the heaviness and sententiousness of John Knox's prelections seem to have crept into Mr. Stevenson's account of them. In his charming note on Charles of Orleans he now and then seems trifling with his subject, much as that subject trifled always with the Muse. The Yoshida-Torajiro is merely a piece of plain story-telling; the principal quality of the "Gospel According to Walt Whitman" is a kind of luminous thoroughness; the manner of the study on Villon is one of picturesque and intelligent contempt, not without hints and suggestions of an acquaintance with Carlyle. In his discourse on Hugo's romances, Mr. Stevenson is young, and as yet not altogether a man of letters; in his essay on Thoreau he carries mere literary skill—mere mastery of diction, phrase, and sentence—to a higher point, I think, than he reaches elsewhere in any one of his works. Variety indeed is a principal attribute of the book. It appears not only in the material and style, but in the temper and tone. Mr. Stevenson's regard for those "qualities of human dealing" with which he has chosen to concern himself is uniformly clear-eyed and independent; in honesty of purpose, in sincerity of insight, he seems incapable of change; he is at all times equable and temperate. But he appropriates his humour to his theme; he alters his tone as he changes his subject. He is scornful with Villon and genial with Pepys; he is happily generous with Whitman as he is sorrowfully just with Burns. He thinks critically and dispassionately; he writes as his thoughts have made him feel. He is solemn, or sententious, or cheerful, just as the study of his author has left him. Each of his essays is the expression of a fitting and peculiar mood of morality and intellect. He reproduces his impressions in effects. He is a critic in method and intelligence, and an advocate in manner and temperament; and he makes you glad of sorry as—with his reflections and conclusions—he has made himself before you. If his criticism were less acute and methodical than it is, the accent and the terms in which it is conveyed would sometimes get it mistaken for an outcome of mere aesthetic emotion. As it is, the critic is equally apparent in it with the man; you can see that the strong feeling has come of clear thinking, and what is purely intellectual is rendered doubly potent and persuasive by the human sentiment with which it is associated. It is possible that this fact will ultimately militate against the success of Mr. Stevenson's "Studies" as criticism; for criticism—a science disguised as Art—is held to be incapable of passion. I cannot but think, however, that it will always count for a great deal in their favour as literature, and that meanwhile it clothes them with uncommon interest and attraction.

Of the "Studies" individually, I have left myself no space to speak. The least interesting—out of Scotland at all

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events—are certainly the two essays on "John Knox in his Relations to Women;" the least literary is probably the note on "Victor Hugo's Romances;" the least strikingly satisfactory, the story of Yoshida-Torajiro. Better than any of these, I think, is the critical biography of Charles of Orleans, which is charming as reading and unexceptionable as criticism. The note on "Some Aspects of Robert Burns" is one of the most powerful and original of all; it can hardly be neglected by anyone who is interested in its subject; it is worthy (to say the least of it) of association with Carlyle's famous essay. The paper on Walt Whitman is, in its way, as good as the "Aspects;" that on Thoreau, admirable as a piece of writing, is cold and negative in its effect, mistaken in its conclusions (as Mr. Stevenson, in his pleasant and ingenious "Preface by Way of Criticism," has taken care to own), and somewhat too obviously elaborate in method. The "Pepys," on the other hand, is not less admirable than it is delightful; while as for the "Villon," it is in some way the most remarkable work of all. Mr. Stevenson's Villon is not by any means the "Postlethwaite with a jemmy," with whom we have got to be familiar. He is—with the addition of genius and an admirable gift of style—the *mauvais pauvre* of Hugo, a variant on the Rogue Riderhood of Dickens; a man utterly heartless, miserably depraved, and absolutely insincere. He is said to sit "in the narrow dungeon of his soul, mumbling crusts and picking vermin;" and his "Large Testament" is described as "one long-drawn epical grimace, pulled by a merryandrew, who has found a certain despicable eminence over human respect and human affections by perching himself astride upon the gallows." He is a fearful creature indeed; and he is so horribly like his poems that it is not easy to disbelieve in him, or to doubt that he is in very deed the Villon of Noël de Joly and Colin de Cayeux, the poet of Fat Maggie and the gibbet, the greatest singer and the sorriest scoundrel of mediæval France.

## THEATRES V. MUSIC-HALLS

(April 9, 1892)

MR. HENRY IRVING gave evidence on Monday *à propos* of the introduction of new measures tending to destroy the barrier between the theatre and the music-hall, and the long memorandum which he prepared for delivery on that occasion, and which he gave with effect, is worth studying. Mr. Irving frankly declared that competition—competition on something like equal terms—is not what the actor or the theatrical manager fears. He has no objection to the rival playhouse or to the rivalry, necessarily temporary, of the "fit-up," as actors call it, of the ordinary concert-hall or town-hall of the provinces. But a strict limit—a "time limit"—a limit of thirty minutes, he thinks, should be set upon the performance of what they call "sketches" in music-halls. Unrestricted competition should not be allowed to exist between music-hall and theatre; and this, not only because such competition would not be fair to the theatrical manager, but also, and as much, because it would tend to the degradation of theatrical art. There is a great deal of force in what Mr. Irving said about the impossibility of appreciating a serious art in an atmosphere of drinking and smoking. Serious art demands concentration, almost as much upon the part of the audience that receives as of the actor that bestows it. Imagine the news of the death of Lady Macbeth being brought to the stage representative of Macbeth, while waiters in the avenues of the stalls are inviting "Orders, please!" or in act to refresh the smoke-jaded sybarite with lager-beer or lemon-squash, or that more potent pick-me-up—"whisky hot"! In theatrical art there is, as Mr. Irving practically pointed out, an *ensemble*. Many work towards one end; and hence upon the stage proper there is a measure of discipline and a measure of labour of which the music-hall artist cannot possibly wot. It is quite possible, between light refreshments—nay, even while consuming them—to do justice to the extremely

personal art of a Chevalier or a Lottie Collins or a Minnie Cunningham, whose cleverness and whose fascination is not now in question—it may be very great, if you like; but whatever it is, it is exercised under very different conditions from those which govern the appearance of Mr. Irving and Mr. Willard, of Miss Terry, of Mrs. Kendall, of Mr. Hare, and of Miss Millett. To produce with freedom, in the music-halls of London, entertainments claiming to be theatrical, but in reality almost of necessity catchpenny, cheap, and of immediate effect, would tend, we firmly believe with Mr. Irving, to the deterioration of the theatre. Actors and audiences would alike shrink from encountering the difficulties and delicacies, the problems and the refinements, of the higher art. The music-hall is a tavern, as Mr. Irving says: "A tavern with a licence to sing and to dance." Like the ale-house of William Blake, it may happen also to be "cosy and warm." The theatre is—apart from its commercial aspects—an institution that exists for the production of a definite and recognised art. In it even the puritanical world is beginning to recognise an instrument that makes for civilisation.

Whatever legislation may see fit to do or not to do in the matter, there is a point at which music-halls and theatres unquestionably touch. And that point is burlesque. The "sacred lamp"—especially when it is lighted at the Gaiety—does not scorn to illumine the music-hall together with the legitimate actress. Which reflection is forced upon us by the circumstance that, like the rest of the town, we have lately seen Miss Lottie Collins. London is just now, it would seem, pre-occupied with Miss Lottie Collins. Wherever young men gather together, the talk is of—Lottie Collins. At any restaurant that has claims to be fashionable—Lottie Collins. She is the "some new thing" of which the Athenian of to day, as well as of old time, demands to be told. All the world goes to see her at the Gaiety. The lady appears at that temple of merriment and spectacle within a quarter of an hour of eleven o'clock. She is, so to put it, the great "set-piece" with which the Gaiety fireworks—rockets and roman candles and catherine wheels—somewhat tardily terminate. If the burlesque itself is a very little tedious, that is only because it is three-quarters of an hour too long. The right thing in burlesques, you may be sure, was the rapid one of twenty years ago, when an hour of song and dance followed on an hour and a half of serious comedy. The ideal burlesque is still a dessert and not a dinner. Now a Gaiety burlesque is an overwhelming banquet, lasting from half-past eight until well towards midnight. Still, the hours bring their alleviations. It is something to follow the proceedings of that quaint, engaging genius, Mr. Leslie. Miss Sylvia Grey moves, stands, glides, and capers, always with absolute grace. She is the standard of elegance as to these things. Lord Bacon himself would have allowed, ungrudgingly, that she realised—what he asserted was the highest of his three beauties—the beauty "of decent and gracious motion." Then there are two or three notable dances by four minor celebrities—most of them, if our memory serves us, dressed in comely black. If the story wearies, and the fun becomes thin, these less famous graces are a distinct alleviation. At last, over all the theatre, comes the sense of something promptly expected. The place, from stalls to gallery, is all on the *qui vive*, till someone—apparently slim, and obviously flexible, someone fairly pretty, intelligent of expression, and with a mass of blonde hair, one who is dressed most unbecomingly in red and in black, however—enters and takes the middle of the stage, and sings her song and its chorus. Miss Collins sings with some measure of art, acts with some measure of comedy, kicks and tumbles over the stage like a demented Salvationist breaking into Bacchanalian song. She is everywhere—and everywhere at the same time. The effect produced is remarkable—much more remarkable, to our thinking, than the performance itself, violent, dexterous, surprising though it be. The lady's art, though undoubted, is grotesque. The lady herself, with her *entrain*, her *abandon*, must be, we take it, magnetic. She is a feature of the day, in any case.



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